1	2	3	4
44.	Integrated Development of Mahabharat Tourist Circuit	445.63	356.50
	TOTAL:	9590.24	7863.17

Foreign Tourists visiting India

411. PROF. ALKA BALRAM KSHATRIYA:
SHRIMATI SHOBHANA BHARTIA:

Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether India had a record 13 per cent growth in foreign tourist arrivals last year compared to 3.93 million foreigners visited the country in 2005 and 4.43 million people had visited India in 2006 and the Ministry is eyeing an ambitious target of 10 million foreign visitors by the end of the Eleventh Five Year Plan in 2011;

(b) whether the country is still a long way from achieving its full tourism potential comparing China and Singapore have a larger volume of international visitors; and

(c) the concrete measures Ministry is considering to achieve the target?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) The number of foreign tourist arrival to India during 2006 is provisionally estimated to be 4.45 million, recording an increase of 13.5% over the corresponding figures of 3.92 million during 2005. The Working Group on Tourism for the Eleventh Five Year Plan (2007-2012) has set a target of 10 million international visitors in 2011, at the end of Eleventh Plan.

(b) and (c) The steps being taken by the Government for achieving its full potential in tourism and for attracting more foreign tourist to India include:-

- Development of tourist spots under its various schemes of infrastructure development for tourist circuits and destinations;
- Focusing on growth of hotel infrastructure particularly budget hotels;
- Enhancing connectivity through augmentation of air capacity and improving road infrastructure to major tourist attractions;
- Direct approach to the consumers through Electronic and Print media through the "Incredible India" Campaign;
- Creation of World Class Collaterals;
- Direct co-operative marketing with the Airlines, tour operators and wholesalers overseas; According greater focus in the emerging markets particularly in the region of China, North East Asia and South East Asia;
- Participation in Trade Fairs & Exhibitions;

- Optimizing the PR and Publicity;
- Use of Internet and web marketing;
- Generating Tourist Publications; and
- Re-inforced hospitality programmes including grant of air passages to invite the media personnel, tour operators on familiarization tour to India to get first hand knowledge on various tourism products.

Helicopter services from Madurai

412. SHRI T.T.V. DHINAKARAN: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is proposed to introduce helicopter services from Madurai to different tourist destinations;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Government of Tamil Nadu invited Pawan Hans Helicopter Limited (PHHL) for a survey for introduction of helicopter services on the sector Madurai and nearby places. After visiting Tamil Nadu for surveying the areas and holding discussions, PHHL have submitted its report to the Government of Tamil Nadu.

Development of Devanahalli Fort

413. DR. VIJAY MALLYA: Will the Minister of TOURISM be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that the vicinity of Devanahalli Fort of Tipu Sultan in Bangalore is encroached by residential and other settlements;

(b) if so, what is the action that Government propose to take;

(c) whether Government propose to develop the Devanhalli Fort in collaboration with private entities in order to beautify the Fort as the Bangalore International Airport is coming up nearby;

(d) if so, the road map for such collaboration; and

(e) if not, whether Government would develop the Fort on its own?

THE MINISTER FOR TOURISM (SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Archaeological Survey of India have taken up the issue with the Government of Karnataka for verification of the ownership and for regulating the development in and around the fort.